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Moral Angle Blamed For Cuba Fiasco

CPYRHT

NEW YORK, Sept. 2 (UPI) — Concern of some of President Kennedy's closest advisers about the "immorality" of masked aggression led to the failure of the United States-backed invasion of Cuba last year, says Fortune Magazine.

Charles V. Murphy, the magazine's Washington correspondent, writes in the September issue that the plan for the invasion had taken root during the early summer of 1960 and that the Central Intelligence Agency was given responsibility for planning it.

Then President Eisenhower personally reviewed the plan from time to time, Murphy wrote, and when John Kennedy was elected to succeed him he also was briefed.

Upon taking office, President Kennedy was given this general picture of the proposed invasion by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, the writer said:

With a small invasion force, success of the operation would hinge on B-57s controlling the air over the beachhead. The planes were to operate from a staging base in Central America, more than 500 miles from Cuba, and would have only 45 minutes for action on target.

OVER REACHES

In contrast, Castro's force could be over the beachhead and the invaders' bi in a matter of minutes for a much longer time, during his air power thus a necessity, the Joint Chiefs felt.

At a Cabinet meeting April 4, the CIA's Richard M. Bissell—the man given specific responsibility for the plan—gave a final review of the operation, Murphy writes.

At that time, he added, Sen. William Fulbright, D-Ark., chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, declared the United States should not get involved at all. Murphy said two other men present at the meeting shared Fulbright's feelings.

Under Secretary of State Chester Bowles and Adlai Stevenson, the U.S. ambassador to the United Nations,

in deference to their feelings, Murphy wrote, President Kennedy ruled that U.S. air power would not be on call at any time and that the B-57s, down by "our" Cuban allies, make only two strikes four days before the landing and one the morning of the landing.

The attack on D-Day morning was highly successful, Murphy writes. Half of Castro's B-57s and Sea Fury fighters and four of his seven night T-33s, were destroyed or damaged.

DUSK ADAMANT

Then on April 17, with the invasion scheduled for the next day, Bissell reported a call from White House aide Edmund Gandy, who advised the president had ordered that there was to be no more use of B-57s.

Secretary of State Dean Rusk said no. "The incident had already been explained to President Kennedy in full explanation," Rusk said.

Bissell was advised, when he and CIA Deputy Director General Charles Cabell urged Rusk to reconsider but he would not, Murphy said. The writer said Cabell later asked if the invasion force should be pulled back and the U.S. bombers, flying at 10,000 feet above 50 miles from the Bay of Pigs, could be instructed to provide cover.

Rusk said no. "The incident was explained to him fully, and he said no," Murphy continues.

Without the air cover, Murphy writes, the invasion force would have suffered little loss. "It would have been lucky," Murphy said, "if two transports and drivers had been killed."

Logistics became "almost impossible" at about noon on Monday, Murphy writes. Bissell was told the B-57s had to attack in small force and that the invasion force would be unable to support the writer's instructions to provide cover.